

A TRIBUTE TO R. GRAYDON  
BRIGGS OF GRAND LEDGE,  
MICHIGAN

**HON. NICK SMITH**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 26, 1998*

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to R. Graydon Briggs of Grand Ledge, Michigan for his outstanding service to public safety.

Fire controlled is one of the man's greatest friends; unchecked, it is our deadly enemy. Each year, millions of fires kill thousands of Americans and destroy billions of dollars of property. Daily, across this nation, fire fighters risk their lives to protect us, our homes, our businesses, and our belongings. Graydon Briggs is one such man. After serving his country bravely during the Korean conflict, Mr. Briggs returned home to Michigan and began a career of service that spanned four decades. For 37-years, Mr. Briggs served his community as a firefighter protecting lives and property of Grand Ledge residents and the neighboring townships of Eagle, Oneida, and Wauertown.

His leadership abilities and organizational skills caused him to be appointed to the rank of Fire Chief. He discharged this office with integrity for 31 consecutive years. Chief Briggs had the unique ability to cohesively unite both paid and volunteer firefighters under his command. Under his dedicated leadership Grand Ledge saw many improvements in their fire department. They received their first aerial ladder truck, something uncommon to smaller rural communities. A new rescue truck with the "jaws of life" tool was added. The city's first water rescue boat was placed in service. New pumper and tankers were added. These improvements helped lower fire insurance rates for Grand Ledge.

Chief Briggs was honored in 1971 when he performed rescue breathing on a young girl rescued from an apartment fire in which she was trapped. Her life was saved by this compassionate effort by Chief Briggs.

In addition to firefighting skills and administrative capabilities, Chief Briggs became a superlative instructor. He organized and conducted numerous fire training schools and taught his art to hundreds of new firefighters. He has committed his life to the service of others.

As a Member of the Congress of the United States of America, I am pleased to rise today to recognize his accomplishments and join with his many friends and admirers in extending my highest praise and warmest wishes for many happy years to come as he enters his retirement.

**PERSECUTION OF BAHAI  
CONTINUES IN IRAN**

**HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 26, 1998*

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, President Khatami of Iran recently addressed the American people in a televised interview in which he stated that "religiosity liberty and justice"

were the "aspirations of the Islamic Revolution." In this regard President Khatami indicated that the Iranian and American people cherished similar ideals.

Despite these hopeful statements, however, the members of the Baha'i faith in Iran still are subject to systematic persecution aimed at the destruction of this community in its own homeland. Although the number of executions of members of the Baha'i faith are down from the level of killing that occurred during the earlier phases of the Iranian revolution—two were killed during 1997 for apostasy, and the number of Baha'i in prison has fallen from 750 in 1986 to 21 at present, individual members of this faith are still subject to harassment or arrest due to their religious beliefs.

Of most concern are the state enforced measures designed to deny the ability of the Baha'i community to sustain itself. Baha'is are forbidden to elect leaders, organize schools or conduct religious activities. Elected assemblies which, since the Baha'i have no clergy, serve to govern the community were disbanded by Iranian government order in 1983. All community properties, including cemeteries, and other holy places were confiscated soon after the 1979 revolution, and none have been returned.

Baha'is are denied jobs and pensions on the basis of their faith, and Baha'i students are prevented from attending universities which, in turn denies the opportunity for economic advancement and further impoverishes the community. Members of the Baha'i faith have no legal standing and have no recourse to enforce their civil and economic rights within the Iranian judicial system.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that if we want to truly test the sincerity of President Khatami's recent offer to open a dialog with the American people we should ask his government to end the repression of the Baha'i and other religious minorities in Iran. Our government should use its voice and vote in the upcoming meeting of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva to press the Iranian authorities to prove to the international community that Iranian society really does cherish religiosity, liberty and justice by ending the systematic persecution of the Baha'i and all of its religious minorities.

**PRESERVING HISTORICALLY  
BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 26, 1998*

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I introduced H.R. 3266, legislation which will be of great benefit to our nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and will help preserve a vital cultural link for this country. I am very proud that each member of the Congressional Black Caucus has joined with me in co-sponsoring this bill.

Our bill will amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Land Management Act of 1996 to provide additional funding for the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and structures at HBCUs. There is currently an authorization of \$29 million for this activity, but much more is needed.

Last year I sought a General Accounting Office (GAO) study to determine exactly the amount needed to preserve these treasures. The Congressional Black Caucus requested the GAO to conduct this survey, and after a year long undertaking, this comprehensive report was given to me on February 6th.

Every HBCU responded to the GAO survey. The report documents 712 historic properties owned by these institutions, and projects a cost of \$755 million to renovate and preserve these sites. The current authorization requires a dollar for dollar match from the schools, and the legislation I introduced will expand the authorized program by \$377.5 million. This authorization, Mr. Speaker, requires a dollar for dollar match by the school.

Mr. Speaker, once we lose a site of historic significance, it is gone forever. The extent of the threat these sites face is exemplified by their recent nomination to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Eleven Most Endangered List. The schools which will benefit from this legislation are much more than academic institutions. For many Americans these HBCUs represent the very core of their communities, and were a source of refuge, shelter, and inspiration during the dark days of segregation. Indeed, the nomination to the Eleven Most Endangered List states in part, "During the Civil Rights Movement, HBCUs were as important as churches in the black community."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to join with me in this struggle to save a significant part of our heritage.

**"WHAT NEXT IN IRAQ?"**

**HON. ROBERT WEXLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 26, 1998*

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, Saddam Hussein is the same brutal dictator today that he was when he gassed his own people with chemical weapons, starved them to death and machine-gunned them in mass graves. The only difference is that today he has been given a new lease on life by the United Nations. Don't get me wrong. I respect the negotiation effort by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in Iraq. He deserves the world's gratitude for avoiding war—for the time being.

Annan's new agreement with Iraq, however, will not end the long term conflict between Iraq and the world community, and may ultimately create more problems than it resolves. One element of the agreement calls for a "Special Group" of senior diplomats and U.N. inspection experts to inspect the eight Presidential Sites in Iraq. With the inclusion of diplomats and politicians in the inspection effort, secrecy and surprise inspections will be compromised, and U.N. efforts to discover and eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction will be severely handicapped.

All of a sudden, international politics and the greed of countries like France and Russia for big profits in trade with Iraq are paramount to a successful U.N. effort to inspect and destroy dangerous weapons.

By conceding in the U.N.-Iraq Agreement to bring the issue of lifting sanctions against Iraq to the Security Council, presumably before all